

At the beginning of World War I, America found herself unprepared to enter the fight in Europe because we had an inadequate supply of trained military leaders for our Armed Forces. Confusion prevailed at the War Department while recruiters rushed to select, and the military hastened to train, an officer corps that would be large enough to lead "Doughboys" and "Devil Dogs" on the battlefields of France and Germany. Despite the lack of initial preparation, the United States' entry into World War I proved to be the decisive factor in securing victory against our enemies and bringing peace to the continent. After the armistice was signed and our troops came home, American military leaders were wisely determined to never be faced with another shortage of commissioned officers, and on October 2, 1922, 140 reserve officers, at the suggestion of General of the Army John J. Pershing, met at the Willard Hotel in Washington, DC. At that meeting, General Pershing said, "I consider this gathering perhaps one of the most important, from a military point of view, that has assembled in Washington or anywhere else within the confines of this country within my time," and the Reserve Officers Association of the United States [ROA] was organized.

The new found commitment to a well-trained and equipped force got off to a positive start with the passage of the National Defense Act of 1920 which created a 2 million member "Citizens Army," to be led by a 200,000 member Officers Reserve Corps. However, it was clear that the success of this civilian army and reserve corps of officers would depend entirely upon the patriotic and voluntary spirit of Americans. With this understanding, General Pershing charged ROA with the responsibility to recruit the corps, develop public support for it, and petition Congress to appropriate adequate funds to train these citizen service members.

As the United States grappled with recovering from the Depression and getting its economy back on its feet, the seeds of war were being sowed in Europe and Asia, and on December 7, 1941, a surprise attack on American Navy facilities at Pearl Harbor finally pushed our Nation back into another global conflict, World War II. Though still under-prepared for war, we thankfully had an Officer Reserve Corps that had grown to 115,000 and the chaotic rush to recruit officers that took place in the First World War was not repeated. General George C. Marshall said, "In contrast with the hectic days of 1917 * * * with no adequate reservoir of officers to draw upon * * * we now have available in the Officers Reserve Corps a great pool of trained men available for instant service." Clearly, the R.O.A. had done their job.

During the war, the ROA suspended its activities as its members were off serving in the branches of the various armed services; once, however, the hostilities ceased and the troops came

home, the ROA resumed its activities as advocates for the Reserve forces and a strong national defense. That the founder of one of the first ROA chapters in Kansas City, Harry S. Truman, was now President of the United States signalled that the reserve structure was to grow and grow stronger in the post-World War II/cold war era. During his administration, President Truman ordered his Secretary of Defense to aggressively build a reserve military structure, and the Chief Executive took personal pride in the passage of a strong Armed Forces Reserve Act.

It was also during this period that Congress took the unusual step of granting the ROA a charter mandating the organization "to support a military policy of the United States that will provide adequate national security, and to promote the development and execution thereof". With this infrequently granted charter, Congress, in effect, was telling ROA that it respected its expertise and desired the association's advice on legislation affecting national security, as well as matters involving the military, both Reserve and Active.

Over the years, the ROA has taken its charter and congressional mandate seriously. Its positions are without partisanship and are based solely on promoting a strong defense. The officers and members of the ROA have supported initiatives they thought would strengthen our Nation's military, and opposed those which would undermine America's preparedness. The ROA helped block attempts to eliminate the Coast Guard and Air Force Reserves, and to cut the Navy Reserve in half; and, they stood strong against the Panama Canal and the SALT II treaties, as well as any budget or manpower cuts to our Reserve forces. On the other hand, revitalizing the Selective Service System, lifting the embargo on arms sales to Turkey, selling AWACS to Saudi Arabia, and activating the Reserves during the early days of the gulf war all were supported by the ROA. During the Clinton administration, the Association has been out front in seeking postwar benefits for military personnel including medical treatment for victims of gulf war illnesses, and it is most notable that since 1982, the ROA has successfully supported more than \$15 billion in equipment procurement and construction for the Reserve and National Guard.

Madam President, the ROA of today is a strong and vibrant association whose 100,000 strong membership includes active, retired, and honorably discharged officers of all the services; cadets and midshipmen from the service academies and ROTC programs; and officers of the Public Health Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. That more than half of these individuals are life members is an indication of the amount of support the ROA has among the Reserve community, and the credibility it has as representatives of our Nation's

truest "citizen-soldiers". Obviously, such a dynamic organization requires dynamic leadership and I am proud to note that my friend and fellow South Carolinian, Maj. Gen. Herbert Koger, Jr., USAR, is serving as the president of the ROA this year, an office that is rotated annually among each of the services. Additionally, retired Maj. Gen. Roger W. Sandler, who was Chief of the Army Reserve prior to his 1994 retirement, very capably serves as the association's chief of staff. I commend both these men for the excellent jobs they do, especially for the input they give Congress on matters related to our national security.

Madam President, as the Reserve Officers Association prepares to enter its fourth quarter of a century of service, I think it is appropriate to cite another quote by General Pershing, who said, "It would be false economy to save a few dollars by neglecting commonsense preparation in peace times, and then to spend billions to make up for the deficiency when war comes." These are the watchwords of the men and women who makeup the ROA, and words each of us should bear in mind as we approach the 21st century and begin to consider the future needs, roles, and missions of our armed services.

Congratulations to the Reserve Officers Association of the United States on its 75th anniversary.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, at the close of business, Friday, April 11, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,378,191,895,041.28. Five trillion, three hundred seventy-eight billion, one hundred ninety-one million, eight hundred ninety-five thousand, forty-one dollars and twenty-eight cents.

One year ago, April 11, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,143,688,000,000. Five trillion, one hundred forty-three billion, six hundred eighty-eight million dollars.

Twenty-five years ago, April 11, 1972, the Federal debt stood at \$429,624,000,000. Four hundred twenty-nine billion, six hundred twenty-four million dollars, which reflects a debt increase of nearly \$5 trillion—\$4,948,567,895,041.28. Four trillion, nine hundred forty-eight billion, five hundred sixty-seven million, eight hundred ninety-five thousand, forty-one dollars and twenty-eight cents, during the past 25 years.

THE U.S. ARMY'S TASK FORCE XXI ADVANCED WARFIGHTING EXPERIMENT

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, during the recent congressional recess I visited the U.S. Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin, CA, with Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dennis Reimer. The purpose of my visit was to observe the culmination of the Army's brigade-size Task Force XXI warfighting experiment. I want to take a few moments